11 Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

but he did face about, and forgetting his seketi began to pole in earnest.

In a few moments his body glistened with the exertion, and over the circle and snake of kamemba in the small of his back the perspiration ran down in a trickle. When he had almost caught up he slackened his speed, and he and Bibifo talked about the river. Old Bibifo knew the river well. He was born beyond the Granman's country. A snake swam across the path of the boat, Bayo said. It was good luck. "See, look," he called. His eyes were sharp. The old man saw it, too, and then he called to us. There, close to the shore, a little ahead of us, a constrictor twined its tail about a liana, hanging head down, with a salamander slowly disappearing into its mouth. There was a slight jerk, the liana shook, the snake swallowed, and another bit of the salamander was out of sight.

Farther ahead we heard the report of a gun, and the crying of the mate of the wounded bird followed us for a long while. Bayo and Bibifo identified each cry, called by name the things that grew, planned about their timber rafts when they got back, until the next rapids were reached and passed and the conversation could be resumed, and then they talked about things which they did not care to have the Bakra know, and though they spoke none of the words of their ritual language, we could not understand anything they said. It was not until later that we learned to work out some of the elisions in their speech.

A strip of sandy beach showed where a village stood, and as we passed it, we could see the azang, the spiritual guard of palm fronds, preventing evil spirits from entering the village. We saw also a strip of white hanging from the end of a stick which had been put up for the ancestors, and beyond, the low shelter for the roughly carved and weathered image holding an obia pot on its head. Under the azang the path stretched like a narrow ribbon which was soon lost as the walls of green converged.

"Is that another village?" we said, pointing at a pale stretch across the river.

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

other bank, and now as we reached the opposite shore, we saw the small opening of a minor channel which we were to take. With astonishing nicety the tip of the juncture of the main stream and this smaller channel was reached at the same instant. Loin cloths were adjusted, and once more the pole-men took up their pole-sticks and continued the slow passage against the current.

The boats were now again traveling close to the bank, so that the details of the forest which fringed the river could be clearly seen. Straight from the water rose the wall of sheer green, all of a dark, almost dull purplish color—a wall of fifty, a hundred, a hundred and fifty feet and more, as the lianas dropped down from the upper branches of the great trees which gave these parasitic growths their support. Here and there we saw a brilliant wing of a bird, and a Bush Negro, ever ready to augment his meager food supply, would unlimber an ancient shotgun, steady himself, and shoot. In Sedefo's canoe, Angita, his pole-man, saw a blue and golden macaw silhouetted as it sat on a slender branch. Out came the shotgun. The macaw, startled but unhit, flew to another branch farther upstream. We crept slowly, noiselessly ahead, and when we were close by Angita shot again, and missed again. The macaw now did not trouble to fly away, and when Angita made aim once more, Sedefo stopped him.

"No, mati—Let him be, friend. The gods are protecting him. Put away your gun."

Again we cut across, as we regained the wide channel, this time so that the men might speak their errand to the spirit of their great ancestor, the god of the large creek. We did not go too close, however, and all we could see was an azang again, the spiritual guard of palm fronds, and beyond the whitened trunk of a tree and a slender stick with a bit of white cotton attached to its end.

Sedefo spoke conversationally. "*Aoo*—ancestor—we are going up the river. We are working for the American Bak'a. We are on our way to the G'ama's country. Grant

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

enrich the soil. Now before a field is chosen for cutting, it must be surveyed carefully to see that there are no snakes to be injured; that no trees which have strong spirits like the silk-cotton tree, or the parasitic akatasi, will be destroyed; that no ant hill whether on the ground or on a tree be disturbed. But Kasanya's wife's mother's brother was careless, or unlucky. A small ant hill had escaped his notice.

"The *Akantamasu* god is powerful. It is a bad god," Kasanya said over and over, making of it a refrain to his story.

When the ant hill was destroyed, its spirit fixed itself upon the family. Kasanya's wife's mother became ill, and although the contents of one obia pot after another were used up in bathing her with sangrafu and the serabaki and chembe leaves, she did not get better. Her husband, an able obia man, made special charms for her to wear about her neck, and sprinkled her with medicine with the feather of the sacred opete, the vulture, but still her illness kept on. At last they went to a diviner. To the village of Dahomey they went, the village where the most powerful obia was lodged, and there she learned that the Akantamasu god had come to the family. The diviner told her how to serve the god so that she might have respite—the days that were sacred to him, the dances she must dance on these days, the sacrifices to make. They knew that it would never be a friendly god to them, for it had come as a kunu. There was more trouble and more. The family gave many offerings, and the possessed woman danced whenever the spirit seized her, but soon she died, and the others have been dying since.

"What happened to the man who destroyed the ant hill? Did he get the Akantamasu gadu?"

"No, not he himself. His mother, and his sister, and his sister's children."

"But why?"

The answer was that kunu worked that way, and he went on to tell us about his sons. The first son had gone to the

Herskovits & Herskovits E-8 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

said, "It is not a woman and a snake, as you might imagine from this," and she indicated one or two lines of the design. "We do not carve the snake in my family. We have a *tchisa*—a taboo—against carving snakes, for snakes are our kunu. . . . Years ago my brother went to the French shore and worked for a white man. The white man asked him to kill a snake, and he was afraid, but the white man laughed at him, and because he had a weak ak'a, because his soul was not strong, he killed the snake. If he had told us about it and had sent a piece of the snake, we would have held a burial, as would have been right. But he did not do as he should have done, and so now the snake is not a good spirit for us. We must give it offerings, and dance kunu. It is bad to have a weak soul. My brother did a bad thing, and now I and all my children, and my daughters' children, and their daughters' children on and on will have this kunu."

Farther up the river, in the deep interior, we stopped at the village of Opoku. As we walked to the house of the village head to give him our greetings, we noticed an unusually large house. It was a *liba-wosu*, a house with an upper story, more substantially built than any we passed, and ornamented with elaborate carvings, as were all personal houses of the men. The owner of it, we heard, had been dead eight months. Four more would need to go by before it could be entered. It had been owned by a powerful man, and his belongings were many. We could see some of them through the openings between the slats which formed its walls—an apinti drum, magnificently carved, tall earthen demijohns of rum, boxes, the edge of a metal canister and a lamp. Inside there were guns, and machetes, and native carved paddles, and implements.

Our men joked about the contents of the demijohns as they passed, speculating on the strength of the rum when the containers were opened, and when we asked about the house later—whether, for instance, we could not buy the drum, we were told that the twelve-month interval between a man's dying and the dividing of his property was not yet passed. When the time came, his brothers and sisters

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

It is told that this practice of isolating the provision ground was a heritage of the days when the ancestors were escaping from slavery, for then the whites were at war with them, and villages had often to be deserted. But to desert a village was one thing. What local spirits were there could be urged by the proper magical invocations to follow to another site. Men did not, after all, derive their food supply from a village. It was the provision ground upon which life depended. The provision ground had at all costs to be saved. Access to it was, therefore, made difficult. Trails were never clearly marked, and were often marked to mislead the invading enemy. The river bank was allowed to give no hint of shielding, behind the thicket, a clearing where crops grew to feed the warriors and their families. When a village was destroyed by the enemy, the Bush Negroes fell back on their fields and maintained life. To this day, it is said, this practice holds, for though hostilities ended more than a hundred years ago, the planting grounds are rarely found close to a village.

Walking behind Kasanya in the darkness which gave to each down-hanging vine the outlines of the great aboma snake, held sacred in this bush, we fell to wondering whether in this, as in so many instances, the accounting for current beliefs, in terms of the experience of slavery alone, would prove inadequate.

"We have arrived, Bak'a," said Kasanya, interrupting our speculations. His eyes were sharper than ours, for not even when he spoke did we see the widening of the path and the clearing beyond. Yet fewer than a hundred additional paces found us facing four small huts scattered about a sandy open place, and a woman who was on her way from one house to another turned toward us. She listened to what Kasanya said, with her head slightly averted, pulling at her pipe all the while.

"Ai, they can stay," she said, pointing to the largest of the four houses. "As many of you as can, sleep there. The house next to it is for provisions. We have not much to offer here."

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

"The openings in the wall there," she explained, when we asked her about the two squares cut into the wall behind the altar, "are for all things that fly. In this place they must come and go as they like. Bats come here, and insects of all kinds, and when they want to go back to the bush, they must be able to go as they like. That is the wish of the gods. So they told us long ago."

6

We were led from house to house. The gods had spoken. We were friends, and as friends who came not to harm, we were given the hospitality of friendship. There were other shrines, but we did not have to ask about them. They were pointed out to us with the other sights of the village.

The closed low hut near the Apuku shrine we had entered was to the river god Toné. It was a very small enclosure, and before it was a plant which covered the low entrance. It belonged, we were told, to an albino woman who was possessed by Toné. But she was not in the village now. Farther down the path was a larger house, another shrine. This had a piece of iron over the door and, when we asked about it, the girls who were following us ran, and the men merely said that it was the place of the Kromanti obia and passed on.

As we continued on our way, each woman was anxious not to have us slight the house her man had built her or fail to admire the carvings that were inserted into the weave of the palm walls. The huts were swept clean—the cleanliness of the entire village was even more striking than that of others we had visited—and but for a few stools, which were brought out for the strangers while they spoke with the old people who lived in the quarter, they were entirely bare. In every house, however, there was sure to be a shelf, large or small, or several shelves, on which stood prized food trays with carvings which covered both inner and outer surfaces. Combs and food stirrers were taken down and shown us, and the calabash dishes made by the women

1tHerskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8
Saramacca

REBEL DESTINY

173 Alabi, as the Granman called him, was the Araby of history, the great rebel of whom Stedman, who campaigned against the Bush Negroes long ago, wrote.

"White man, Alabi did not know how to work gold, or to earn great wealth, but he had stories in his head." He had called the first black krutu. And from Alabi had come Danieh who built Gansee, which was even now one of the most populous villages on the whole river.

"Long ago in the bush here, we had men, Bak'a!"

There was G'ama' Okosu, a Nomerimi Negro, the leader of those men who had escaped to the swamps on the coast, instead of going into the bush, and whom the people were afraid to touch.

"G'ama' Okosu could change into a kwatta monkey when he liked. He could cross the river without a boat."

The Dombi Negroes had their man, too. He was Sabaku. He was leaving his people to run away from slavery. He was going into the bush. "If we do not meet again in life, we shall meet in death," he said. He had no boat in which to cross the river, so he went to Yank'o, the buzzard, and he asked him to carry him. "I have no home, O Yank'o," he said to the buzzard, "but I will get on your back, and there my home will be. You who fly high, who fly over water, and over the high bush, carry me to safety."

The Granman himself was part Dombi and part Matchau, he said.

[825] "That is why we do not shoot a buzzard. If we shoot him by accident, then we must say 'Many thanks.'"

There was Tata Wadia who opened up this bush, who was still sung about by the Negroes of the city when they invoked the Kromanti spirit.

"I have the stick which he used."

"Will you let us see it, Granman?"

"Gbolo!"

[126] "We will photograph you holding the stick, Granman, and when we show it in our country we will tell the story."

He nodded. But the photograph was never taken.

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

these animals. So the hunter is occasionally surprised to find a big cat responding to his game call.

Far up the river, jaguars have been known to come near a provision clearing and carry off an infant while the mother was at work in the cassava field. The grown Djuka, however, is not afraid of these cats. The jaguar is a medium-sized feline, the third largest of the cat family, but it is essentially cowardly. If a lone Negro encounters one on a game trail, a duel commences that usually ends with the shooting of the jaguar. On one occasion we saw a hunter come back from the game trail, armed only with a machete, who had met and killed one of these cats.

There are several smaller cats in the South American jungle, ranging in size from the puma to the diminutive jaguarundi. The boa constrictor is not the menace that some travellers make it out to be. The Bush Negroes will not kill either a boa or an alligator, nor will they allow a white man to do so. If they see the white man aiming his gun at snakes, they will knock up the muzzle. Such reptiles are sacred. Some of the Indians of the district, on the other hand, are fond of snake meat, and hunt it regularly. But the Bush Negroes look down on them.

In setting traps the Bush Negroes exhibit the typical cunning of jungle dwellers. They have preserved the West African types of traps. Trails on which armadillos forage are set with a shotgun, in the middle of the path. By seizing the bait the animal shoots itself.

At night on the game trail the lone hunter builds a lean-

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

moving air, roared like an open steam valve. We are rudely awakened by Daniels, who shakes our hammock violently. He shouts over the uproar; everyone must leave the huts at once. A giant tree close to the windward is about to fall and might crush the huts while we sleep.

We quickly abandon the hut and are immediately drenched. Imagine such disconsolate men, staring at the moving wilderness of leaves damning all trees and all weather that takes them out of their hammocks at two o'clock in the morning, and almost reconciled to the idea of being crushed in comfortable hammocks in preference to standing out in the open, expecting a tree to fall on them anyway. But in a short time the storm subsides sufficiently to allow us to return.

The next morning we break camp and trek another day back into the interior. There are no camps now, no huts of any kind, no men. Only the high bush. We make an early start to look for the puma that escaped the night before. There is a bloody bed of sheltered leaves where the puma rested, but the rest of the path is obliterated by the storm.

We turn and begin the trek back.

A curious custom widely prevalent among the Bush Negroes is that called *Dressy Dagu*, or dressing the dog, in

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

224 other words, preparing a dog in such a manner that it will
231 be capable of hunting a particular species of game. There are
125 several methods of accomplishing this. The Negro may grasp the animal between his knees and pour the *dressy* through the nose of the dog. This substance is composed of pieces of the animal which they desire the dog to hunt. Most commonly it is the foot; this is dried and then infused with water. The infusion is also rubbed on the dog's feet. Such preliminaries are usual in hunting peccary.

If the hunter desires to prepare his dog for pursuing the *labba*, a type of water rodent, he cuts the flesh from the nose of the labba and also from its feet, prepares an infusion with water, and then pours this through the dog's nose. Still another method is to mix the hair of the animal which is to be hunted with pepper, and then to rub the dog all over with this mixture.

A fourth way is to feed a piece of the liver of the desired animal to the dog; but it is essential that the liver be placed on a knife, allowing the dog to eat it from that.

224 There is an interesting superstition among the Djukas that
845 anyone who is related to a twin will seriously disrupt a hunting party. On one occasion a large quata, or spider monkey, was sighted by some hunters who, however, failed to bring the animal to earth after fifteen shots. Their ill-luck
to the fact that one of the huntsmen "belonged to a tw

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

226 The most primitive way of fishing, among the Bush Negroes, is with the bow and arrow. It takes a steady arm and
[227 eye. The fish arrow has a barbed point, which, besides being
411] glued on the shaft with gum, is tied to the centre of the shaft by a string of singrassi. When the fisher sights along the shaft and lets fly, skilfully impaling a fish just under the surface of the water, the point of the arrow may break off, but the string retains the shaft. It threshes around in the water behind the wounded fish, marking its location.

226 The Djukas are clever folk. One species of fish, the *cumaru*,
225 feeds on the seed of a certain tree, the *walaba*, that grows by the river bank. When the seed-pod of this tree is ripe, it explodes with a loud *pop!* For the fish this sound is associated with the falling of the seed into the water. They swim toward the sound to find and eat the seed. To attract these fish the Djukas imitate with a slap of the hands the noise of the cracking pod. The cumaru draw toward the spot, where the fisher is waiting with poised arrow. The result is more fish for the evening pot.

226 The women have a way of fishing in which they knock
[227] the bottom from a bottle and put crumbs of cassava into it, up near the neck. The trap is placed beside the bank, in shallow water where it can be watched. Minnows enter the submerged bottle after the crumbs, and the waiting women snatch out the bottle before the fish can escape. These minnows belong to the Rosy Barb species, highly prized by collectors of tropical fish.

[227] Other traps are carefully constructed of bamboo slats and

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

778 other points throughout the village, one also sees posts, hav-
782 ing attached to them cross-pieces, from which a length of white cloth is flying. A few bottles usually stand around at the base of these posts. Here one comes to address the Gadu (any divine being), or the spirit of a deceased person, when one has something to request, or wishes to return thanks for good luck. This petitioning is accompanied by the pouring of water or strong drink ("high wine" or *sopie* as it is called by the Bush Negroes) on the ground. One may encounter these cross-pieces with the white cloth at almost any place in the village, as for example, near a sacred tree or on some of the paths leading to or from the village. We may also see various *krom-tiki*, sticks or pieces of bush vines which have grown in a peculiar zigzag fashion. These, too, are supposed to have protective powers against evil.

● 825 Snakes, excepting the venomous varieties, are held in
778 reverence, and their worship is woven through the whole religious pattern. If a snake enters a hut, it is not molested, but allowed to return to the outside. If it shows no disposition to depart, it is chastised gently with a little broom-like contrivance and chided for not knowing its proper home. The bahkra who tries to kill a snake is prevented from doing

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

so. In accordance with the voodoo ceremony, sacrifices of white chickens are occasionally offered to Papa Gadu, the snake god. Sacrifices are especially made to the large land and water boas. Human sacrifices, if they occur, are kept secret from all outsiders. We have no reason to believe in their occurrence. 825 778

A most interesting *Winti* dance was witnessed by Mr. Charles de Goeje, leader of the Dutch government expedition to the Tumac-Humac Mountains in 1908. This dance was for the purpose of propitiating the spirit of a snake which had been accidentally burned to death while a provision ground was being prepared for cultivation. 825 776

About 10 P. M., Mr. de Goeje relates, the drums began to play furiously. There were two apenti and one large ageedah drum. The people began to sing in an unusual manner, and the wife of one of the headmen, thickly smeared with pemba dotee, sat immovable as an image upon a carved wooden stool. After the drums had gone on for a while, there was heard the exclamation, *"Pour watra!"* A man came with a basin; he dipped a palm leaf in it and sprinkled the seated woman while the drums beat furiously. The woman seemed to awaken and began to turn around and around on her stool; she twisted and turned her body sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly. When she had reached a high pitch of excitement, she began to dance.

Several other women smeared with pemba dotee rose and took part in the dance. They danced around the long drum, gesturing as if the drum were speaking to them. They then

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

embraced the drummers, streaking the men's heads with pemba dotee. A number of women in the audience also caught the spirit. One of them began to shake and convulse; when she awoke from her trance, she ran to her hut in the village. Another woman began to murmur as though in a dream. Still another one ran about among the assembly streaking and rubbing others with the sacred white clay. This dance continued until very late, and the whites, overcome by fatigue, were forced to retire.

The next morning at daybreak they again assembled. One of the women began to chant in a thin strange voice, and at 6 A. M. the dance started again. A couple ran dancing into the village clearing and smeared a man with pemba dotee; he also began to prance and became hysterical. This is known as *winti kiki*, or the transference of winti from one person to another. Several others, obtaining the spirit in the same way, began to dance. One man, after dancing a long while, ran around the clearing and finally fell flat on his face. He remained there until others carried him away. The man who had been playing the ageedah drum circled around with his drum between his legs like a hobby horse. Some of the women fell on their knees and continued to dance thus. One fell to the ground and beat the earth with her arms and legs. This ceremony ended at 10 A. M., after which the body of the snake, which had all this while been carefully guarded, was buried with great solemnity.

The dancing recommenced at four o'clock in the afternoon. The women went to a little Gadu house. One had a

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

severe attack of winti. She fell upon her knees and appeared half lame. The others lifted her up. A youth came with a green stick; he bit into it and spat on the woman's calves, legs, feet, and arms. After a while she was able to stand alone. This seemed to constitute the end of the dance. It had somehow become known that the Papa Gadu, the snake spirit, was angry, and this big *gadu pray* (god's spread) had been necessary in order to propitiate him.

The women who are seized with the winti sometimes mutter a few words. The others regard these as the utterances of a spirit and say: "*Ya, gadu*"—"yes, God." Upon inquiry among the women who had caught the winti spirit, Mr. de Goeje found that they all complained of feeling very dizzy or giddy when in such a trance.

Certain localities, as well as individuals, may be possessed by evil spirits. The Pwaba Creek is such a place. Were a Djuka to go up this creek with any clothing on, he would never come out alive. So upon entering the waters of Pwaba the Djuka strips off all his clothes. That nullifies the bad magic.

Every Bush Negro, to protect himself from all varieties of black magic, wears a number of charms or amulets. He

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

were killed. When we told Abaisa about this, he nodded approvingly, not at all surprised that his obeiah charm had warned us of the impending danger.

Other bush beliefs come under the head of *trafers*, or taboos. Primitive behaviour is very largely governed by categorical rules; although the individual is unaware of the origin and purpose of these rules, violation of a taboo is unthinkable. It is trafer, for instance, to sit on the ground. This explains the many intricately carved stools in our collection of Djuka art objects. It is also trafer for a Bush Negro woman to have intercourse with anyone outside of her own tribe. This was not so in the old days, for Stedman mentions that the white commissioners parleying with the rebel blacks were liberally entertained and provided with women for the night. Such a thing would be trafer now. It is taboo to harm the alligator, and if you were, by some unspeakable chance, to kill one, its ghost would return and destroy all the children in your family.

Besides these general taboos, there are personal trafers and food taboos that differ for each individual. If one man shoots a sloth (*seloss*) it will spoil his gun, but his brother or his neighbour may kill one with impunity. It is that particular Djuka's trafer. Another man may have the turtle as his food taboo. The turtle is a well-known figure in Djuka folklore. The *sneri patu*, also called *logosu* and *kaw*, is spoken of as "walking like a sick man." The belief that when a turtle bites a man it will hold on until it thunders, a common belief in parts of rural America, is also found in Djuka land.

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

of a burning fire without being harmed. Bathing every day for nine days in water in which rusty scrap iron and peanut husks have been boiled renders a man impervious to the cut of a knife and his flesh capable of turning any blade. Stomach-ache is treated by drinking an infusion from the hollow handle of a dance rattle. Especially potent in all magic preparations are the bristles of *tamanua*, the anteater. *Obeiah watra*, another infusion, is drunk by men before going into the bush, to give them luck and strength. It is also possible to acquire strength or other virtues by rubbing one's body with the putrescent fluid gathered from the corpse of a dead man who possessed those qualities.

If a person should find fecal material in front of his hut or rotten eggs along the trail in such position as to make it likely for him to step upon it, it is certain that this material was placed there by a member of the community who is attempting to *wissi* or bewitch him. Anyone who removes this matter is liable to insanity.

Minor cuts and wounds may be treated with the bark of the *apracanyo* tree. This is ground up and mixed with the brew prepared from the leaves known as *prkein fal cacu* (little rooster).

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

obeiahs, house gods, fetish houses, menstrual huts, and matrilineal system of inheritance are all to be found as ancient customs among the forest tribes of the West Coast. Other details, such as the use of chickens for sacrificial animals, the huts with their rectangular walls, the manufacture of butter from the palm worm, the sacredness of snakes and alligators, the use of drums for religious supplication, and the beating of them with the hand instead of with a stick as the Indians do, are also customs which are similar to West African customs and probably derived from them. The impaled turtle-shell on a staff, the badge of the witch doctor's profession, represents the symbol for the female genitalia among some West African tribes. The Bush Negroes' boats and paddles are typically African in design. The *awasa* dance of the Saramaccaners was borrowed from the Aucaners, among whom it is a direct West African survival.

From the study of these culture survivals among the Djuka tribes it can be seen that most of the jungle civilization of the Bush Negroes is derived from their West African ancestry, modified here and there by contact with the Indians of their new home. The remainder of the material culture of the Bush Negroes is borrowed from the white settlements along the coast, from which gunpowder, fish-hooks, bush-knives, and other articles filter upstream.

[P. 192 is Work]

/137 cont./

241 and sugar cane, while in the third year some pineapples, bananas, and sugar cane are also harvested.

Thereafter one surrenders the ground to the second growth (kapoeweri) shooting up, here called "kauwé," and to the weeds, like the cutting grass "baboen nefi" (Scleria secans), which prevent further growth of the cultivated crop.

This system of clearing grounds requires much land. It is a severely predatory cultivation which can only be employed when sufficient free land is available. Only after many years can one return to the same piece of forest to lay out a new ground, depending on the recovery of the forest, more particularly on the top growth.

[592] Among the Bush Negroes of the Marowijne it is the rule that
[476] each household provide for itself. The man clears the ground with help of family /familie/ members or friends, who in return for food are taken in during this time. If the man has /138/ one wife, then ordinarily two grounds per year are cleared; if he has more than one wife, then he clears two grounds for each wife.

[622] The captain /kapitein/ of a village lays out his ground him-
[643] self, helped by his villagers. The ganman /chief/, however, does not work himself, but, regardless of the number of his wives, has his family and other helpers clear grounds in return for food for the
423 workdays. The products of the grounds of a household are not joint
593 property, but rather the wife asserts her rights over the produce from one ground, while the man claims that from the other ground. Thus a distinction is made between the agrarian property of the wife and that of the husband.

3. The Plague of Ants and the Ant-hubes

241
• 825 In the agriculture of the Bush Negroes the plague of ants plays a significant role. The leaf-cutting or parasol ants (Atta sexdens and Atta cephalotes) are very destructive because of their attacks on the leaves in the plantings. The first-named species is the greatest evildoer in the interior districts of Surinam. Cassava in

/138 cont./

124 [125 particular suffers greatly from this type of ant, but maize, tajer, and bananas are also eaten. This plague is so serious that the clearing of a new ground is partially determined by the occurrence of the nests of these ants at the place. Normally these nests lie fairly far apart in the forest, but as soon as the crops of the grounds come within the domain of the ants, the nests grow rampantly. In addition, at just about planting time the ants produce numerous sexual forms, which, as a result of the cleared lands, have a favorable opportunity to swarm and found new colonies. The leaf-cutting ants are therefore "Kulturfolger" /followers of culture/.

As a result of this plague of ants, it is usually not possible for the Bush Negroes to cut extensions to the existing grounds for longer than two to three years. After all, the kapoeweri of the abandoned pieces of ground functions then as a hiding place for the younger ant-nests, and one drags, as it were, the ant plague along with one. There is no combating the ants, and through impotence the Bush Negro is forced to yield the field. This flight before the ants consists in the search for new grounds farther into the bush or, in case this is no longer possible for some reason, in the occupation of new lands elsewhere along the river.

137 136 /139/ Stahel (1) has pointed to the fact that among the Bush

[113]

1. Het Bosnegervraagstuk en het Coronieplan /The Bush Negro Question and the Coronie Plan/, Department Landbouwproefstation Suriname /Department of Agriculture Research Station, Suriname/, Report No. 9, October, 1944, 28 pp.

Negroes the older grounds change into a low second-growth, called by him "ant-kapoeweri" /ant-bush/. In effect, in many places where a dense Bush Negro population is found, such a strip of second growth occurs along the rivers. According to Stahel, this inferior bush comes 13 about through the presence of the great nests of leaf-cutting ants. Ac- [114] cording to his calculation, at a density of six ant nests per hectare (a maximum which is confirmed in the vicinity of Paramaribo, but which, according to my own observations in the Bush Negro lands,

/141 cont./
241 of this predatory cultivation has been reached. The nearby
423 agricultural lands are kept in use with too brief a rest period, with
[134] the result that the soil is overworked and the periodic recovery
[825] of the forest proceeds at an ever slower pace. In addition one struggles to an increasing degree with the problem /142/ of the leaf-cutting ants, which keep the easily accessible places occupied.

241 The consequence of this circumstance is that the Bush Negroes
311 are forced to make the grounds farther and farther from their vil-
[484] lages. One travels for hours up or down the river in order to
[422] reach good land. When one cannot make good use of a forest creek in order to transport the produce from the field, one is forced to carry the harvest for one or two hours through the forest to the river. The Bush Negro does not go farther than a two hours' walk (about six kilometers from the river) (see the map /see p. 13 /).

241 On the Tapanahoni one spends even days in traveling to less
311 populated areas in order to plant and to harvest. One then estab-
361 lishes so-called work camps along the river, from which one
[103] operates in the surrounding areas. This is the case, among others, between Godoholo and Granbori for people from Drietabbetje or
311 other centers. That one does not go even farther up river, all the
423 way past the last village, Granbori, has to do with a prohibition
643 by the granman of the Aucaners. That is, the latter wants to reserve the lands lying beyond this point as hunting lands and therefore will not make them available for agricultural purposes.

241 The inhabitants of the villages along the lower Tapanahoni,
311 such as Sajé, Clementi, and Malobbi, frequently lay out their food
423 grounds in the Lawa, where they can have at their disposal agri-
361 cultural lands as far as the Aboenasoengoe Falls. Farther upstream
103 on this river the Bonni or Aloekoe Negroes assert their rights.

5. Differences between Aucaners and Paramaccaners

101 The conditions given above apply in the main to the Aucaner
162 Bush Negroes of the Tapanahoni. They number today approximately
[311] 6,500 persons. The Paramaccaner Bush Negroes of the Marowijne, approximately 1,700 in number, are in somewhat more favorable

/145 cont./
252 with the matapi (2) and subsequently baked on the baking plate (pan).

2. matapi = long tube of plaiting with which one expresses the juice and the water out of the grated cassava.

during which the granular mass is constantly stirred. The kwak [251] ultimately consists of dry yellow grains. One can keep kwak in good condition longer than bread. It is softened with water and eaten with some sugar (if available).

A less-used product is "afringi." For this one grates freshly peeled cassava, then expresses the grated cassava in the matapi, and dries the meal on the fire or in the sun. Subsequently one pounds this meal in the matta (3) and then kneads it with water

3. matta = large wooden mortar.

into little balls. These are boiled together with fish or meat into a soup. One calls this soup "afringi," which literally means "to throw," presumably because one throws the little balls into the pot. The same product is called "apitie" on the Surinam River.

244 Sweet cassava (kasàba-swieti) is little planted; the tubers are
[262] harvested after three months and eaten boiled.
[252] The most important pests in the cassava are: leaf-cutting
● [825] ants, which cut off the leaves; deer, which eat the young tips and also bite off the stalks; tapirs, which consume the stalks and leaves and also trample many; koni-konis (4), which dig

4. koni-koni = Surinam rabbit.

out and gnaw the tubers; pingos and pakieras (5), which root the

5. pingo and pakiera = wild pigs.

tubers out of the ground and consume them.

/146 cont./

243 During the sowing one experiences a great deal of trouble
125 from "stondoifies" (1), which eat up the seed; the maturing ears

1. stoadoifies = small pigeons, literally stone pigeons.

are plundered by a species of blackbird, "andokie," grain paraheem or pikoetoes, and the little rice bird, "tie." The loss that is suffered through these birds is frequently considerable. Other pests in the rice are not further known, or mentioned.

Bananas (bâna).

245 These are always planted, but, in comparison with the cassava, less frequently. One ordinarily sets the plants in the ground somewhat later than the cassava shoots, in order to let them grow at the same time. It also happens that a certain section of a ground is planted exclusively with bananas and bacoven because otherwise these hinder the other crops too much with their shade. After 10-15 months the bunches are ripe.

There are various varieties in use:

granbâna, ripe five months after the appearance of the bunch, fruit long;

oemanbâna, ripe three months after the appearance of the bunch; fruit long;

patamacca-bâna, idem; fruit short and somewhat sour in taste;

doengoe, idem; fruit long; frequently with twin fingers;

kodjakondre, idem; fruit short.

252 The bananas are boiled as "green bananas" or, as ripe bananas, are first boiled and then pounded fine into "tomtom." Ripe bananas are also pounded uncooked, then mixed with cassava flour, and baked into a "koekoe."

/193 cont./

778 824 A currently widespread idea about animism would lead one to think, for example, that before felling a tree a Refugee Black addresses words and offerings to it. That is entirely absent from his thought: either this tree is likely to serve as support for a god, in which case it can be touched only after complex rites having the aim of transferring the god elsewhere, or it is simply a tree, and one cuts it down without further ado.

784 825 — One very clear aspect of these conceptions is the dagu kunu, a curse resulting from the killing of a dog. Any animal may be killed with impunity but not a dog, because "a dog is almost a man."

[613] At the opposite extreme from the true kunu, a curse extending to a whole lineage, the dagu kunu applies only to the guilty person and draws only limited misfortunes upon him.

[772] No feeling whatever with respect to the dog enters into this conception, but only the idea that he is placed on a particular plane, near the plane of the human and his level of force.

776 /194/ The Great Gods

The Boni recognize a supreme God, Nana (1), more

1. This term comes from the Agni.

commonly called Masa Gadu, and Kedi Amu, Kedrampon in Kumenti language. He created the lower gods and all that lives on the earth.

793 Here is how the old Boni men relate the myth of the creation of the world:

God created a brother and sister, Adam and Efa. They were twins. He put them in a place where they lived happily without working. But he forbade them to touch the fruit of the custard-apple tree.

/203 cont./

153 789 791 Possession begins progressively; in the beginning the divinity does not find in its bearer sufficient passivity, it does not succeed well in expressing itself through his mouth, spectators observe only incoherent gestures and hear only unintelligible stammerings. The pupil must continue his training for a long time in order to become a suitable bearer.

789 The god, when it has just entered a man, always begins by rendering homage in its language to Masa Gadu, proclaiming that it acts only in his name and by his will.

[576] [198] Then it greets those present, employing formulas which are the exact transposition into its language of the ordinary Boni formulas of politeness; that even if it is getting ready to speak to them in the harshest manner.

The god speaks then in its language, saying not very intelligible things to the audience that appear to be related to what goes on in its country, to its family (for it is believed that these lower gods have a family). Finally, it begins to speak in ordinary language in order to be understood by those present, and answers questions.

796 787 825 Various categories of gods capable of bringing on possession. The Refugee Blacks assume that four categories of lower gods exist:

The first category consists of a series of gods which present themselves to men under very different aspects but which are nevertheless felt to be of the same nature. All speak the Kumenti language, all are well disposed toward men and do not exercise against them the kunu, that is, the curse;

--The Kumenti, which have the appearance of jaguars and live in the bush;

--The Djadja, which have the appearance of ocelots;

--The Opete, which have the appearance of the urubu and which reside in the air;

/203 cont./

796 789 825 --The Bënsuyki, which have the appearance of Indian women and which reside in the waters of the rivers;

The second category is that of the Ampuku, much feared [784] gods of the bush, likely to exercise the kunu against men. The [198] Ampuku speak a language which is very well known to the Saramaka but which nobody speaks in Boni country. When they wish to be understood, they speak the ordinary Saramaka dialect. They can, it is said, /204/ be seen at night in the bush in the form of unknown men dressed in the manner of the Refugee Blacks;

The third category is that of the Vɔɔdë or Papa gadu, gods still more feared, which become incarnate in the boa snake [198] dagowe. They speak the Papa language;

796 789 [198] Finally, much feared also are the Këntamasu, gods of the termitaries, which speak a language which nobody understands and use the Kumenti language to make themselves understood.

It is important to note that there is not a god Kumënti, a god Ampuku, etc., as there was in the pantheon of the Ancients a god Mars, a god Vulcan. For the Refugee Blacks those are generic names like Frenchman, Englishman. Questioned about a phenomenon of possession, they will answer: "It is Ampuku who makes," but in the same way they would say in front of a boat: "It is Saramaka who makes."

796 789 825 The relationships between these gods and their animal form are obscure. For the Vɔɔdë it is clear that people believe they really live in the dagowe snakes, since the accidental death of one of these snakes in the burning of a clearing is considered a calamity which risks bringing a kunu. But that does not prove that a divine character is attributed to the snake itself. As for the Kumënti, there does not appear to be any precise bond between the genie and its jaguar appearance. If one meets a jaguar, one may fire on him all the same without inconvenience. If he is the support of a Kumënti, the shot will not be able to touch him, the god will not get angry about it.

/204 cont./

776 This shows that in the minds of the Refugee Blacks, the
787 animal is simply a prop for the god. The god borrows this body
825 in order to manifest itself, but it is not bound to it by nature. These conceptions are totally contrary to those of the Indians, who tend to personify in their minds the beings and phenomena of nature.

778 As we have said, the Boni do not see these gods since the
787 person possessed loses consciousness. But in the time of the ancestors, there were people who used to see the gods, and it is through them that their present-day descendants have an idea of their appearance; on the other hand, certain gods such as the Ampuku and the Winsuŋki may be seen in dreams.

Sometimes the residence of this or that god is known, for it has revealed it through the mouth of its bearer; the god's
[823] name is then given to that place. For example, at the mouth of the Abounami there is a fall named Ma Akoti Gadu Suta. It is there that the god resides which revealed itself in olden days in an old woman named Akoti.

774 Connections with the group of relatives. The idea of a god
613 protector of the lineage, whose worship, brought by the founder of the group, is regarded as indispensable to the life of the collectivity, is not found clearly among the Refugee Blacks. There are actually many divinities which have entered the lineage and which are worshiped collectively. But these di-
[784] vinities are intruders; they have penetrated into the group by force in order to exert an inexorable vengeance against it.
[202] People do not apply to them to ask for protection, and they are worshiped only because they cannot be expelled.

776 /205/ There is not believed to be any kinship tie between the
602 gods and men, nor any tie of a systematic or exclusive character.

/210 cont./

776 [976] character, touchy and vindictive. In speaking of them one says Papa gadu (papa does not mean "father"; it is a term of respect used for important personages (2)). They are believed

114 175 776

2. This is the interpretation given by the Refugee Blacks. However, 18th-century documents on the origin of the slaves draw attention to the existence of an African tribe called Papa. Allusions contained in documents of the archives of Surinam, recently studied by Madame Silvia W. de Groot, would tend to identify the Papa with one of the populations of present-day Dahomey. In this hypothesis, the cult of the papa gadu would represent an archaic form of the Dahomey cult of the snake gods.

776 They are believed
[825] to have as habitual bearers the boa snakes (dagowe) (3) which

3. This word appears to be the deformation of the Dahomey word dãgbe.

are not to be confused with the great water snakes (anaconda) [824] that the Refugee Blacks call mboma sineki. They may also reside in silk-cotton trees (kankan tree) and in the trees called katu udu (Bombax surinamiensis).

[787] The Vɔɔdũ which incarnate themselves in humans may be of either sex; if a male god is concerned, it is called "tata vɔɔdũ."

/210 cont./

976 [825] The Bumba gadu, other gods of the same nature and equally feared, have as bearers other categories of snakes, principally the great anaconda water snakes.

[984] [812] The Voodû, we have said, are feared; they can exercise on a lineage the collective curse called kunu. But, no more than the Kumênti do not represent a principle of good, they do not represent a principle of evil. Not all are so badly disposed toward men, and even if one of them is the enemy of a lineage, it is not for that reason badly disposed toward the rest of men.

787 178 [562] However this may be, the cult of possession of the Papa gadu is not at all in decline among the Boni. According to the cross-checking we have been able to do, of the 670 persons living on the French bank there are at least 40 to 50 who have a Papa gadu, the great majority of them old women.

787 784 /211/ The Voodû /sic/ are much feared, and for that very reason much respected. They are oracles which are consulted very often, without consideration of the evil their kunu has done and will still do. A god which exercises the kunu but which is provisionally declared appeased may be consulted without danger; it is always assumed that in any case its bearer, if he respects its commands, has nothing to fear from it.

787 562 It is possible that, very unconsciously, women use the fear that the Papa gadu gods inspire in order to maintain their independence and privileged position in Refugee Black society.

153 79 787 [198] [178] [515] [824] [534] Instruction in possession appears to take as a pattern the same principles as that which correspond to the Kumênti. It involves the teaching of the Papa language; this language appeared to us to be in decline; in fact, it is used only for formulas of greeting; then the possessed people vaticinate in ordinary language. Instruction in possession also involves daily ablutions with decoctions of leaves; certain of these mixtures are particularly complicated (it is said that they include more than a hundred different kinds of leaves). Instruction is essentially individual; however it also includes dances; on this occasion a

/222 cont./

--The Papa gadu (Vɔɔdŋ). The kunu that one of them exercises upon a lineage comes uniformly from the fact that in times past, one of the ancestors had inadvertently killed a dagowe snake (boa), usual bearer of the Papa gadu. For example, the snake might have perished in the burning of a clearing. Some time after, the god had possessed a member of the lineage and revealed that henceforth it would exercise a kunu;

--The Ampuku. The kunu of an Ampuku begins in an analogous way; in days gone by an ancestor had, for example, cut a katu tree without performing the rites suitably, or had made a clearing in a place where an Ampuku was residing;

--The Kɛntamasu (who call themselves Akɔlo), gods of the termitaries, much feared, may exercise a kunu if, before cutting a clearing, someone has, in spite of all his searching, allowed a termitary to escape him, which thus was not the object of the indispensable rite;

--Finally, the kunu may be brought by a dead person's yɔɔka. For example, a man of lineage A had once upon a time unjustly accused a man of lineage B. The latter committed suicide out of revenge. The meaning of this act is not the same as in Europe. It is not a question of making one's enemies live in shame and remorse, but by sacrificing one's life to cause an eternal vengeance to be wreaked upon one's enemies. Some time after the suicide, the yɔɔka reveals itself in a man of his lineage and announces that it will pursue the members of lineage A eternally with its kunu.

Thus the offenses which the kunu punishes are not moral sins as we understand them, but involuntary acts without inner meaning. The purifications and sacrifices demanded are likewise purely exterior acts.

/237/

787 In this way they put a series of questions entailing yes or no answers and which narrow down the problem more and more.

791 For this divinatory procedure, they pay the man who has brought it into play three liters of tafia, two pieces of cloth, and one machete.

787 695 This procedure is put into play to confound thieves and adulterers. The plaintiff publicly calls on the accused to come and undergo the test: Mi ɔ tya yu go a sweli! If he refuses, it is the equivalent of a confession.

In 1947, Liki (Aw.B.), accused of having stolen 20 grams of gold by a man from Loka, was thus put to the test. The rope was not cut. He was declared innocent and it was the plaintiff who had to pay the price of the test.

In 1950, the uncle of Tabayé (Dip. I) accused him of having committed adultery with his wife. He denied it, but he was put to the test which gave a positive result; he confessed immediately and begged his uncle's pardon. Then they were reconciled. Of course it was he who paid the price of the test.

787 Another important divinatory procedure is the Kumẽnti bui (ring of Kumẽnti). This is a surprising form of divination by pendulum. The ring, which is made of fibers, is ordinarily kept hidden by its owner. Very few people have any. The ring, suspended at the end of a string, is put in oscillation. Its owner puts a question to it. If the answer is affirmative, it oscillates from right to left. If it is negative, it describes a circle.

• 825 Another procedure is sometimes used after a sacrifice to know whether the god has received it favorably: it consists of killing a rooster to examine the color of its testicles: if they are found to be black, the sacrifice has not been accepted.

/239 cont./

754 [974] 929

On this point je is taken for granted that Indian magic is much more powerful than African magic, and that any Indian is capable of attracting his enemy's akka.

--Transforming himself into a vampire (azemĭ) and flying at night in search of sleeping men in order to suck their blood and eat them in spirit; this conception, closely related to the one which the West Indians have of the soucougnan, comes from Dahomey (in Fon, aze = sorcery). It is said, as in Dahomey, that the azemĭ flies by emitting fire through the anus.

--Seni wi sani: this is what the Creole: call "sending bad baggage." This is acting upon a living being or an inanimate object to make it behave in abnormal fashion at the expense of the enemy. For example, if someone is bitten by a snake or if a child is carried off by a tiger, the action of a wisimĭ will be blamed first, for normally snake and tiger do not attack. But there is no material limit to the action of the wisimĭ, who can make a branch fall on his enemy's head or make a cartridge of dynamite burst prematurely.

• [825] The idea that the sorcerer may transform himself into a jaguar, dog, or other animal is not assumed by the Refugee Blacks. Neither do they have the idea of brotherhoods of sorcerers.

754 695 How does society defend itself against the wisimĭ? There is first of all the test oath. At regular intervals, every two or three years for example, the grand man gathers together all the Boni to the last man before Odun's chapel, and makes each one drink a little of a magic liquid while inviting him to utter the formula: Efu mi e meki wisi fu dede a sama, mi mu dede: If I do sorcery to make someone die, I must die. This is what is called diggi sweri, to drink the test. Actually, it is a harmless liquid, but each one is convinced that a wisimĭ would not be able to drink it without dying from it. If someone stubbornly refuses to present himself at the ceremony, he is not obliged to, but he has denounced himself: suspicions will be directed on him henceforward.

6:Hurault--398 K-5 (1948-1958) 1961 SRB Bush Negroes SRB Boni

/253 cont./

Various Beliefs

578 Fyo-fyo. If a Boni is on bad terms with someone of his lineage or of another lineage, he has the absolute right to turn a cold shoulder to him and stop having anything to do with him. But 828 if, hiding his rancor, he seeks, from selfish motives, to main- 753 tain the appearance of friendly relations, he risks falling ill, be- 761 ing struck by various calamities, or even dying from the effect 789 of what the Refugee Blacks call a fyo-fyo. The nature of this [825] force is not clear; they know only that its support is a small, common insect named fyo-fyo. They declare that if a person dies from the consequences of a fyo-fyo, one of these insects will be seen leaving his body through the nose at the moment of death.

776 Taku sani. By this name the Refugee Blacks designate maleficent [795] entities of the bush, which they imagine as of nonhuman nature by contrast to the taku yɔ́kɔ, wandering spirits of dead people 753 rejected by society. These entities are lower beings devoid of 828 consciousness but dangerous for men into whom they may enter, rendering them sick or mad. Certain of these entities are believed to reside in plants, like the kɔtikɔ́ti; others are thought to take on the appearance of dwarfs (baku), whom certain people believe they sometimes see at dawn on the outskirts of villages.

751 One protects oneself against taku sani by special ɔ́bia, and those who do not feel completely secure take a certain number of precautions in addition, like that of tearing up the leaves they have used for drinking water from creeks.

/262 cont./

[874 978] door; it was a particularly feared kĩndu that no thief would have dared to remove.

[875 978 776] --The Kĩntamasu are the divinities, especially maleficent and hostile to men, who live in the termitaries (these are termites proper, who make their nest in the earth, and not wood lice, much more common). There is one to each termitary.

[989] After a meticulous examination of the soil of the clearing, one marks all the termitaries /263/ and sprinkles each of them with a preparation containing leaves, pink clay kukusa, and manioc juice. One adjures the genie to go away, no matter where.

It happens that in spite of all the precautions taken a termitary is forgotten. Then, several days later, one will [989 784] have the consternation of seeing the Kĩntamasu reveal itself in someone of the lineage; it announces that it is going to [782] exercise its kusu (curse). It is temporarily appeased by offerings of tafia, various drinks, red cloth.

[976 198 989] The Kĩntamasu call themselves the Akɔ̃lo. Through the mouth of their bearers they speak a language nobody understands. However, when they wish to be understood by those present they speak Kumɛ̃ti.

[755 784] Observation in Boniville, January, 1957:

A...., boatman of the border-fixing mission, asks for three days off. His wife, Masauman, has been ill for several days; divination (in this particular case the gita of a female relative in his lineage) showed that it was the doing of a Kĩntamasu injured in the burning of the clearing which he himself, A...., cut for his wife in October. The Kĩntamasu has not yet manifested itself directly, but a kusu threatens; to appease it he must put in action the remedy known only to M...., an old man of Asisi. He will go to the spot, following

538 [965] /267 cont./ audience and to create an atmosphere of participation in the rite.

This ritual character makes it so that the Anansi Tou cannot be recited any time and in any old way. The story-teller may speak only at night, in the presence of a respondent and of an audience of at least two or three persons. A ritual formula: "diriti" -- the response of the audience: "odaeti," precedes each new story. It is only with extreme repugnance [124] [126] [961] that informants consent to listen to and comment in the daytime on a tale recorded on tape, particularly if their parents are still living, for it is said among the Refugee Blacks as in Black Africa that telling stories in full daylight makes one's father and mother die.

[114] [119] These tales belong to an authentically African accumulated store, practically unchanged in spite of the borrowing from the Creole Blacks of Paramaribo of several themes concerning automobiles, steamboats, etc., inserted in droll fashion into the traditional themes.

The usual hero of these tales is Anansi, the crafty one. [125] Anansi is the name of the Mygale spider (1). It is noteworthy, [191]

1. The spider cycle is characteristic of the Akan (Agni-Baoulé-Abron) culture area. Anansi is the name of the Mygale spider among the Agni.

however, that this spider does not appear to play any special role in the beliefs of the Refugee Blacks and that no divinatory power is attributed to it. In fact, in the tales of which he is the hero, Anansi is nearly always represented as a man.

6:Hurault--421 K-S (1948-1958) 1961 SRB Bush Negroes SRB Boni

538 /2 ? cont./

Habitually figure in these tales:

Wéase	Anansi's wife
Akpwatitikwati	his sons
Asongbeki	
Pankinapu	
Bigimofu	
Santasimooyu,	his daughter.

(825) /268/ Also included under the title of Anansi Tori are tales in which only animals appear: lon, the elephant (whose description the Refugee Blacks have kept through oral tradition), kɔ́gboni, the agouti (1), who knows everything that happens

1. Rodent the size of a rabbit.

in the bush, kariaku, the deer, a sly old blade who thwarts all tricks (2).

2. It is strange to see this animal play the role of the fox of our fables; the deer easily escapes the hunter thanks to his acute vision, but he does not really have intelligence.

The tales transcribed below are 14 in number; they have been chosen from about 30 and represent the most characteristic themes as well as the best-constructed narratives.

About half of the tales of the Refugee Blacks turn upon two fundamental themes:

--Hunting rites, whereby Anansi succeeds in killing all the animals of the bush except one who, cleverer than he, succeeds in turning the trick and killing him in turn;

*539 /281 cont./
so sell, bananas and yams. He sold it all and got two sous; he took the two sous and bought a little snake(4). He came

• [825]

4. Mboma (couleuvre of the Creoles) is the large anaconda water snake.

back home, they asked him: "Where is the money?" He said: "That is what I bought, a little snake."

They whipped him until he was nearly dead. He went into the bush until he found a place; he dug a fine round hole. He filled it with water and put the snake in it. He gave it small fish.

The next day he took food again. He walked, walked until he came to the market. Comrades, again he sold all the food. He saw a woman at the entrance to the market with parrots. He said to her: "Woman, how much is a parrot?" She said: "I sell one for one sou." He said: "Give me this one." He took the parrot. He saw another woman who had rats. He said: "Woman, how much is a rat?" She said: "I sell one for one sou." He bought the rat.

He went back home.

They asked him: "Where is the money?" He said: "That is what I bought, a parrot /282/ and a rat." Comrades! They took the boy, they hit him until he was nearly dead.

His mother said to his father: "All that happens there is thy fault. He must not be given food to sell any more."

The next day, they did not give him any. Pikinbaya kept quiet and busied himself with his snake until the snake told him: "I am hot, I want to go into a brook." He lifted it, put it on his neck. He carried it to the brook and put it in. Then he came back to the village.